

**The District of Columbia  
Eighteenth Annual Maternal and Child Health Citywide  
Coordinating Conference  
Tuesday, February 24, 2004**

***“Ensuring the Health of Families in the Nation’s Capital: A Plan of Action”***

**TENTATIVE AGENDA**

Please note that times and sessions are subject to change.

7:45 am - 8:30 am	Registration, Continental Breakfast and Networking Opportunity
8:30 am - 10:00 am	Opening Plenary Session
Introduction	♦ William J. Hunter, Deputy Maternal and Child Health Officer, District of Columbia Department of Health
Emcee	♦ Robert A. Malson, President, District of Columbia Hospital Association <b>(Invited)</b>
Greetings and Remarks	Honorable Anthony A. Williams, Mayor, District of Columbia <b>(Invited)</b>
	♦ Ronald E. Lewis, MPP, Chief Operating Officer/Senior Deputy Director for Health Promotion, District of Columbia Department of Health
	♦ Members of the Council of the District of Columbia <b>(Invited)</b>
Introduction	♦ James A. Buford, Director, District of Columbia Department of Health <b>(Invited)</b>
Keynote	♦ Marc A. Morial, President and CEO, National Urban League <b>(Invited)</b>
	Presentation of 2004 Lantern Awards
	♦ Marilyn Seabrooks Myrdal, Maternal and Child Health Officer, District of Columbia Department of Health
10:00 am - 10:15 am	Break
10:15 am - 11:30 am	Concurrent Workshops

**General Workshop Sessions**

***Understanding the Title V Maternal and Child Health Block Grant***

*Authorized under Title V of the 1935 Social Security Act, the Title V Maternal and Child Health Block Grant is the only federal program devoted to improving the health of all women, children, youth and families. This workshop offers participants an opportunity to learn more about the federal-state partnership and provides a framework for understanding the District’s Title V planning process, performance requirements, local*

*objectives, health status indicators, program allocations and the relationship between theory/evidence-based and selected health practices.*

### **From Data To Action: Putting Research To Work**

*This session provides a forum for allied health professionals, researchers and clinicians to share local best practice research relevant to District of Columbia maternal and child health practice.*

*Effective public health action must be based on accurate knowledge of the causes and impact of poor health outcomes and effective interventions. Key to conducting the core public health functions of assessment, quality/assurance, monitoring and policy health development, health departments must regularly and systematically collect, assemble, analyze and make available specific information on the health and well-being of the community including epidemiologic and other studies. In turn, the results of these assessments must be used to affect public interest and build capacity to develop policy.*

### **Reaching The District of Columbia Immigrant Population: Access, Accountability And Affordability**

*Similar to other sectors of the United States, immigration in the District of Columbia has steadily increased over the past decade, specifically among women. Their undocumented status and cultural and language differences, have resulted in many immigrant populations experiencing barriers in accessing important social and human support services, including maternal and child health care. Research has shown that the use of formal health care for refugees and immigrants is constrained by the lack of knowledge, limited resources, access to care, and cultural differences in illness and help-seeking behaviors.*

*This workshop focuses on raising participants' awareness of the disparities that exist among immigrant communities in the District of Columbia. Strategies for effectively addressing disparities in immigrant communities and engaging in culturally appropriate policy development will be explored.*

### **Mothers and Infants Workshop Sessions**

#### **Perinatal Periods of Risk: An Innovative Approach To Reducing The Infant Mortality Rate In The District of Columbia**

*For more than a decade the Perinatal Periods of Risk Assessment model has been used in developing countries by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the World Health Organization (WHO) to monitor and investigate fetal-infant mortality. The conceptual framework analyzes fetof-infant mortality by birth weight and age at death and is then used to determine preventable fetof-infant mortality. The model includes a thorough assessment of factors in the following categories: maternal health/prematurity, maternal care, newborn, and infant care.*

*This workshop will describe the Perinatal Periods of Risk model and the potential to benefit from implementing such a strategy in the District of Columbia for improved understanding of women's perinatal health. Workshop participants will discuss recommendations for reducing preventable deaths among this population offered by the District's Child Fatality Review Committee and the impact of the Perinatal Periods of Risk assessment. In addition, participants will develop specific strategies for*

*implementing Committee recommendations based on the Perinatal Periods of Risk assessment model.*

### **Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders: Identification, Linkages And Advocacy Services For Children And Their Families**

*Maternal prenatal alcohol use is one of the leading preventable causes of birth defects and developmental disabilities. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that more than 130,000 pregnant women per year in the United States consume alcohol at levels shown to increase the risk of delivering a baby with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder. Children exposed to alcohol during fetal development can suffer a wide range of disorders, such as growth retardation, birth defects of major organ systems, mental retardation, learning disabilities, attention deficit disorder, and the inability to make appropriate judgments.*

*This workshop will focus on services in the District for children with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder and their families. Workshop participants will learn about the assessment process children and their families receive and the impact it has on services and service delivery. In addition, the workshop will culminate with a discussion on how local and national service systems can enable children with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder to reach their optimal potential.*

### **Promising Strategies For Improving Maternal Health Outcomes**

*Maternal care has vastly improved in the last century. While most pregnancies are problem free, some have problems. These problems range from very minor to very serious, with solutions from a better diet to emergency surgery. This session will evaluate and assess the major risk factors such as infections, metabolic abnormalities and other prenatal risk factors associated with obstetrical complications with a view to correcting these risk factors to achieve better obstetrical results. It will also assess the importance of magnetic water as a mode of detoxifying blood to enhance the acidic free environment necessary for safer obstetrical outcomes.*

### **Women and Men Workshop Sessions**

#### **Eating 5 To 9 And Feeling Fine -- Fruits and Vegetables Anytime: A Campaign For Men's Health**

*Scientific findings continue to support the importance of eating more colorful fruits and vegetables as they may reduce the risk for heart disease, hypertension, diabetes and certain types of cancer. Although eating more fruits and vegetables could have a profound impact on men's health, an unacceptable percent of men, specifically African-Americans, are still not consuming enough.*

*This workshop will focus on the National Cancer Institute's (NCI) **Men Eat 9 a Day Campaign**. NCI's campaign to reach African-American men is among four national initiatives launched by the United States Department of Health and Human Services. This session will engage men as consumers, researchers, health care policy makers and providers to assess systems barriers for increasing men's consumption of more fruits and vegetables.*

## **Model Substance Abuse Treatment Programs For Pregnant Women And Moms**

*Substance abuse during pregnancy and post partum has been identified as an issue critical to the health of mothers and babies from all socioeconomic groups. Such conditions as fetal alcohol syndrome and other deleterious effects of drugs are preventable. Successful prevention of adverse birth outcomes can result in substantial cost savings related to health care, foster care, special education and incarceration.*

*Comprehensive programs that address women's substance abuse holistically in the context of her health and her relationship to family, community, and society are most effective and most critically needed. Research has shown that programs that address the full range of the needs of women are correlated with increasing abstinence and improvement in other measures of recovery, including parenting skills, and overall emotional health. As such, treatment for substance abuse during and after pregnancy can be more effective than at any other time in a woman's life.*

*This workshop examines model programs that focus on comprehensive strategies to engage chemically dependent women into treatment. The array of services including, comprehensive health assessment, women's health, infant and child health, early intervention, home based support, and HIV/AIDS counseling, substance abuse and psychological counseling, health education and promotion, education training and remediation, housing and aftercare services will be discussed in the context of an integrated program structure. Perspectives on residential and non-residential programs will also be examined.*

## **Children and Youth Workshop Sessions**

### **Teen To Teen: Talking With Adolescents (Invitation Only)**

*Adolescence is frequently described as a time of engaging in risk-taking behaviors. In 2000, nearly two-thirds of U.S. teenagers reported initiation of sexual intercourse prior to high school graduation according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Statistics further indicate that youth experience a high number of sexually transmitted diseases and unintended pregnancies during this same period. Additionally, like national indices, the District of Columbia's youth population mirrors, and in most instances, exceeds these stark realities. In the past ten years, violence among adolescents has increased to the point that homicide is the second leading cause of death among young people. And more recently in the District, an alarming increase in gangs (crews) and the violence associated with these groups is on the rise.*

*This workshop will explore the impact of risky behaviors among youth and potential consequences. It will provide participants with the essential knowledge needed to help recognize warning signs demonstrated by other youth who are heading for trouble. It will teach skills for intervening effectively and steering youth who appear to be at risk for unhealthy behaviors toward healthy choices. Also emphasis will be placed on the importance of long-term commitment, support, and follow-through.*

### **Youth Violence: Bullying**

*Recent attention has been directed at the relationship between normative and low level aggression in children that may lead to the development of more serious assaultive and violent behavior. Despite the establishment of public information campaigns and policy resolutions on the part of government and organized medicine, there is a dearth of*

*information on bullying, being bullied and the risk for involvement in more serious violence.*

*This workshop session examines the prevalence of bullying in the United States and explores intervention strategies that can contribute to the overall reduction of the interpersonal intentional injury burden in this country and application for the District of Columbia.*

11:45 am - 1:30 pm

Fifth Annual Essay Contest Awards Luncheon Ceremony

1:35 pm - 2:45 pm

Concurrent Workshops

### **General Workshop Sessions**

#### **Breastfeeding: A Family Affair**

*Breastfeeding is one of the most important contributors to infant and maternal health (Surgeon General 2000). Breast milk is the ideal method of feeding and nurturing infants; it increases mother-infant bonding, provides optimal nutrition, immunologic protection, and maximizes neurodevelopment. Despite the many benefits of breastfeeding, the rates among African-American families in the District of Columbia as compared to other ethnic groups are the lowest. While the reasons for such low breastfeeding rates are multifaceted, efforts to address this public health challenge and implement culturally appropriate strategies to promoting increased breastfeeding among African-Americans in the District is underway.*

*This workshop will focus on the findings of the Howard University Hospital WIC Family Center's Breastfeeding, Lactation, Education/Environment, Support and Services (BLESS) Initiative. Lessons learned from the initiative's implementation of Baby Friendly USA objectives will be discussed.*

### **Mothers and Infants Workshop Sessions**

#### **Advocacy, Data And Research: An Integrated Strategy For Sustaining A Maternal and Child Health Policy Agenda**

*In a time of budget cuts and funding constraints, research and data provide an important measure of programmatic and policy success. In order to ensure that resources are directed to support the health of women, children, youth, and their families, research and advocacy become important partners. Data and research provides a base for priority setting, planning, and policy development. Advocacy, in tandem, serves as a strong voice for supporting public interest priorities, accountability and change.*

*This workshop will focus on building a bridge between the research and advocacy. Workshop presenters will explore how to best use research and data to build capacity and develop policy. Participants will learn effective advocacy strategies.*

#### **Teaching Health Education To Children Through The Arts**

*Educating the public about health conditions that may affect individuals or their loved ones is a very significant function of health promotion. It provides an expanded perspective about personal health and wellness which supports the importance of empowerment and the ability to make wise choices about our health and the health of*



*our families. Health education is generally communicated through printed materials, videos, public service announcements, etc. However, it has been proven that children learn better when the lessons are associated with familiar stimuli such as art, music or theatre.*

*This workshop will focus on the effectiveness of education through the arts. Workshop participants will discuss using art, music and theatre in educational sessions to provide a fun atmosphere and help children retain information. The workshop will include a discussion incorporating art into existing health education curriculums.*

### **The Strategic Plan For Addressing Asthma In The District From A Public Health Perspective**

*The District of Columbia has one of the nation's highest asthma rates. Asthma affects District residents of all ages, races and ethnic groups. Recent studies have indicated that children in low-income and minority populations have been most severely impacted by this chronic disorder. Further, asthma remains a common problem in adults. While many adult asthmatics have a history of the early onset of asthma during childhood, some adults develop asthma later in life due to occupational related exposures to allergens in the workplace. The asthma crisis is more strongly evidenced in those geographic areas of the District with the highest concentrations of poverty, overall poor health and environmental risks.*

*To effectively address the burden of asthma in the District of Columbia, a Strategic Asthma Plan has been developed through the Asthma Collaborative, comprised of joint efforts between public officials and community stakeholders. The workshop serves to introduce the published copy of the plan to participants, and offers discussion on some of the strategies recommended for reducing the effects of asthma among District residents.*

### **Autism Spectrum Disorder: Accessing Services Through the District of Columbia Early Intervention Program**

*The prevalence of children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) has increased dramatically over the past several years. The District of Columbia Early Intervention Program (DCEIP) is responsible for providing early intervention services to infants and toddlers with a significant delay in their development or a condition that is likely to lead to a developmental delay, pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.*

*Presenters will discuss the latest research concerning early identification of autism and its implications for service delivery as well as details regarding DCEIP, ASD diagnosis and the experience of one District parent.*

### **Women and Men Workshop Sessions**

#### **House Parties: A Community-Based Model For Psychosocial Support For Women**

*In the face of today's world, more people are experiencing depression. Although depression is found in all racial and economic strata, minorities are particularly affected by depression. In the mainstream of African-American culture, to admit that one has a mental illness is at a minimum equivalent to being weak or admitting, "one is crazy." Thus, seeking out mental health services is "taboo" in African American communities.*

*“House Parties” have played a supportive role in the lives of African-Americans dating back to the days of the “Rent Party” during the Harlem Renaissance. The “Rent Party” was an institution created in response to Harlem’s inflated rents and served as an inventive solution to raising rent money. In the 1920-30’s house parties were a popular means of social support for African-Americans, and represents the African-American communities’ efforts to address the needs of the community.*

*“The House Party” concept described in this workshop represents efforts to restore wholeness and well-being in the District’s African-American community. Additionally, participants are provided with information about this culturally appropriate effective model for providing psychosocial support to hard-to-reach populations.*

### **Children and Youth Workshop Sessions**

#### **Youth Violence: Moving Toward Solutions**

*In 1997, homicide was the second leading cause of death for young people ages 15 to 24, and the leading and second leading cause of death for African American and Hispanic youth respectively. Today, injuries due to violence continue to be the second leading cause of death for young persons ages 15-24 and the leading cause of death for African-Americans in the same age bracket. At the most basic level, freedom from violence is essential to the positive development of adolescents. Research has shown a correlation between an adolescents’ experience, witnessing, and even the threat of violence and their ability to function optimally physically, mentally and emotionally.*

*This workshop will explore the impact and influence of violence on positive adolescent development and overall health including physical, mental, and spiritual well being. It will also examine research and evaluation-based best practices and strategies to address and positively influence the rates of violence among adolescents.*

#### **Reaching Teens Where They Are: Perception, Acceptance And Engagement**

*The word communication comes from the Latin word “communis,” which means common and refers to the process of establishing something “in common” with another. However, parents and health care providers alike, often feel like they have nothing in common with the “TEEN FROM OUTERSPACE!!”*

*This interactive workshop will explore biases and ways to build healthy and open relationships between adolescents and service providers. Presentations will feature role playing, small group analysis and problem solving. It is the intent that participants will depart with a newfound confidence and excitement for communicating with the “TEEN FROM OUTERSPACE!!”*

#### **S.P.A.R.K. – Supporting Partnerships To Assure Ready Kids**

*SPARK DC is based on the belief that early education lights the fire within every child to succeed in school. SPARK DC is a multidisciplinary approach to school readiness that engages community, parents, schools, early care and education providers in common efforts to improve school readiness and successes for vulnerable children.*

*Presenters will discuss the challenges and strategies for collaboration from the perspective of schools, childcare, and other organizations from two of the eight SPARK sites.*

2:45 pm – 3:00 pm

Break

3:00 pm - 4:30 pm

Closing Plenary/Reception

**Sister Circles: A Framework For Promoting Healthy Lifestyles**

*Current trends in women's health behavior dictate that it is critical to examine healthy lifestyle practices within a social context. In the public health arena, various frameworks have been used to understand women's health. The dominant model has been biomedical with a focus on the prevention, detection, and treatment of disease. The emphasis has frequently been on individual responsibility for personal health behaviors (physical activity, smoking, diet, etc.) and medical care (preventive primary care, annual screens, prenatal care, etc.).*

*Recent efforts focus on broadening this framework by considering social and economic factors that model underlying social dynamics of women.*

*Two renowned authors will share the success of their "Sister Circles" model for developing a wellness plan and promoting healthy lifestyles among women. The closing plenary will include a discussion of the "Sister Circles" concept and an evaluation of the effectiveness of the model to date.*